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ABSTRACT

This volume of Alaskan folktales contains eight stories written in English and Gwich'in. The book is designed with the English and Gwich'in versions facing each other on opposite pages. It is illustrated with line drawings. (CLK)

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ALASKAN FOLKTALES

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ALASKA STATE-OPERATED SCHOOLS
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ALASKAN FOLKTALES

DINJII ZHUU GWANDAK — GWICH'IN STORIES

written by
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and
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June, 1976

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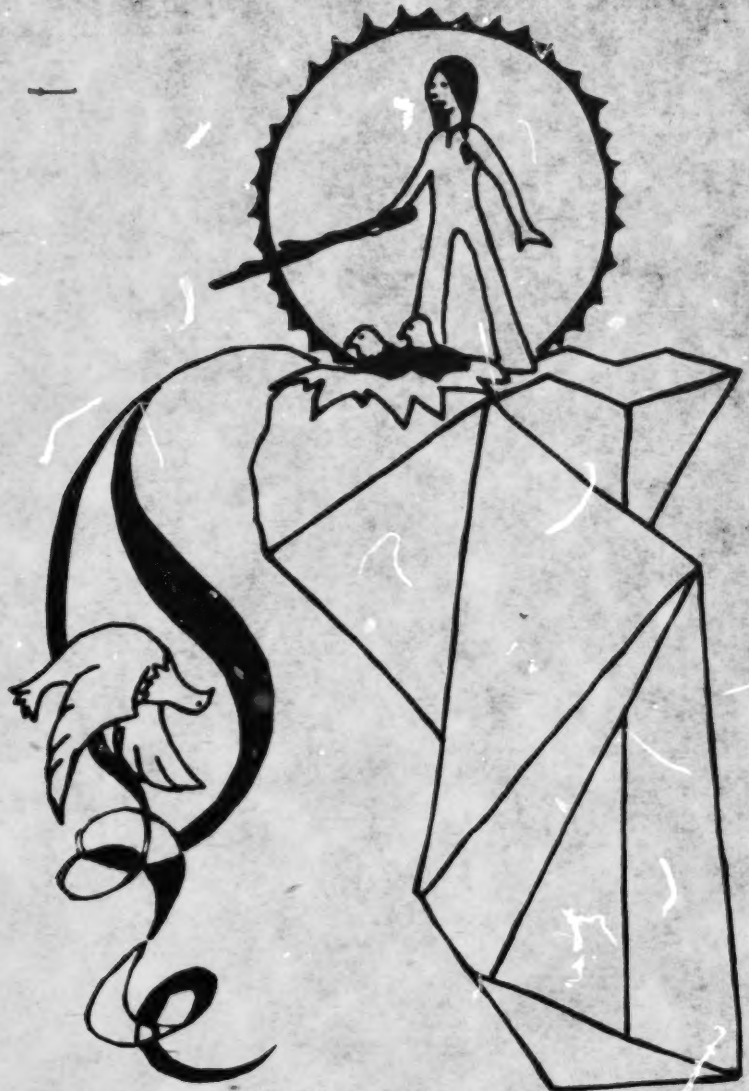

Vasaagihdzak

Vasaagihdzak

Vasaagihdzak łyaa dinjii vaagwiindaii nilįį. Dinjii nąįį ts'inyaa. Nin kwaii chan ts'inyaa. Goo ginjik ky'ąą goots'a' ginkhii. Dachan kwaii googaa ts'a ginkhii. Jyaa dii'in ts'a' dinjii ts'inyaa.

Ch'ihłan gwanaa dąį', ch'izhin łyaa tee gwintsii. Dinjii hee'aa łaa gahtsii. Dinjii a'aa geet'iindhan.

Vasaagihdzak ch'izhin t'oh keegwąąh'in. Yi'eedee kii khyųų hee yagwah'ąįį. Ch'izhin gii nąįį rįį yizhit dilk'įį. Goohan gooti' haa gihiljii. Nagaarii.

Vasaagihdzak ch'izhin gii nąįį datthak inghan gaa neekwąįį rįį akhoonyaa. Ch'izhin tr'ik tsal ch'izhin tsyaa tsal haa akhoonyaa.

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Vasaagihdzak

Vasaagihdzak was a famous man. He became famous by helping people. He also helped the animals. He could speak to each animal in its own language. He could even speak to trees. This is how he was able to help other people.

Once upon a time, eagles were very big birds. They were big enough to eat people. They liked to eat people.

Ch'izhin gii tsal ts'a' ginkhii. Nakhwati', "Needyaa dąį' deegwii'in?"

Ch'izhin gii nąįį t'iginyaa, "Diiti' needyaa dąį' ch'anluh hakat. Ch'anluh choo haa zhee kak gwats'an ahtsin. Ts'a' it'ee diiti' needyaa gaagwiindaii."

Ninyit gwihiilnąiį kwaa ts'a' ch'anluh haakat. Ch'izhin ch'iti' oo'ęę neezhii. Dinjii oo'ęę naaatsit vigii nąįį yihee'aa eenjit. Ch'izhin ch'iti' digii neekwąįį rįį nah'in. Aiits'a' t'inyaa, "Nachaa nijuu nąįį geedaajii?"

Vasaagihdzak wanted to help the people, so he looked for the eagles' nest. He found it high on a cliff. Only the little eagles were in the nest. The Mother Eagle and the Father Eagle were not at home. They were out hunting.

Vasaagihdzak killed all the little eagles except for two. He left one little girl eagle and one little boy eagle.

He talked to the little eagles. He said, "What happens when your father comes home?"

The little eagles said, "When Father comes home, it hails. Big hail stones rain from the sky. Then we know that Father is coming."

Soon hail began to fall. Father Eagle did come home. He brought a man for his little eagles to eat. Father Eagle saw only two little eagles in the nest. He said, "Where are your brothers and sisters?"

The little eagles said, "They were playing by the edge of the cliff. They fell over the edge. We think they are dead."

Ch'izhin gii nąįį t'iginyaa, "Gwikhyųų tseegii'in. Drindih gahaajil. Gił chįį gwich'in gooroonyaa."

Ch'izhin ch'iti' oozhak gwąąh'in. Gwiizhik hee Vasaagihdzak toh ch'ok haa yaagwat. Ch'izhin ch'iti' ił chįį. Oozhee nan kak nat'aanąįį.

Chan hee Vasaagihdzak ch'izhin gii nąįį ts'a' ginkhii. Nakhwahan, "Needyaa dąį' deegwii'in?"

Ch'izhin gii nąįį t'iginyaa, "Zhah tsin haa ahtsin. Nihtee ahtsin."

Ninyit kwaa ts'a' t'ee ahtsin ahshii haa t'igwii'in. Ch'izhin ch'ahan oo'ęę neezhii. Chan dinjii oo'ęę nąąchii digii nąįį eenjit. Ch'izhin gii nąįį neekwąįį rii nah'in. Nachaa, "Nijuu nąįį geedaajii?"

Chan hee ch'izhin gii nąįį t'iginyaa, "Gwikhyuu tseegii'in. Drindih gahaajil. Gił chii gwich'in gooroonyaa."

The Father Eagle looked over the edge of the cliff. Vasaagihdzak poked him with a sharp stick. Father Eagle was dead. He fell to the ground below.

Again Vasaagihdzak spoke to the little eagles. He said, "What happens when your mother comes home?"

The little eagles said, "It snows a little and it rains a little. The snow and the rain come together."

Soon it began to rain and snow. The Mother Eagle did come home. She brought a man for her little eagles to eat. She saw only two little eagles in the nest. She said, "Where are your brothers and sisters?"

Again the little eagles said, "They were playing by the edge of the cliff. They fell over the edge. We think they are dead."

The Mother Eagle looked over the edge of the cliff. Just then, Vasaagihdzak poked her with a sharp stick. Mother Eagle was dead. She fell to the ground below.

Ch'izhin ch'ahan oozhak gwaa'in. Gwiizhik hee Vasaagihdzak toh ch'ok haa yaagwat. Ch'izhin ch'ahan iłchį́. Oozhee nat'aanąį́.

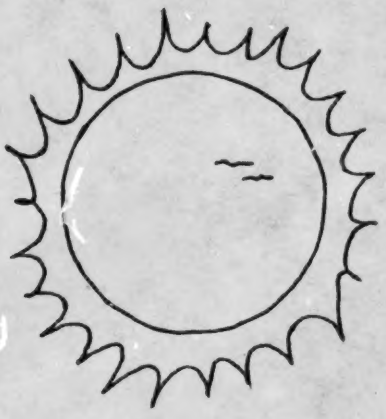
It'ee Vasaagihdzak ch'izhin gii nąį́ haa ginkhii. T'agavahnyaa, "Chan dinjii shih oo'i' shro'. Tthaa rii oh'aa. Tthaa łyaa gwinzį́ vagwaandaii. Dinjii andaa gwinzį́ vagwaandaii."

Ch'izhin gii nąį́ kheenidih gidee'ą́į́ chan dinjii shih neerahaa'yaa kwaa. Gwik'it t'iginchy'aa. Juk drin tth'aii hee tthaa shih gaa'ii.

Ninyit dąį' ch'izhin nitsii. Juk vitee gwintsii kwaa. Dinjii ga'aa dąį' gootee gwintsii. Tthaa ga'aa dąį' gintsii kwaa.

Then Vasaagihdzak talked to the little eagles. He said, "Never eat people for food again. You should eat ground squirrels. Ground squirrels taste very good. They are much better to eat than people."

The little eagles promised never again to eat people. They kept their promise, and to this day, eagles eat ground squirrels.



Vasaagihdzak Zhee Choo Haa

Vasaagihdzak and the Giant

Vasaagihdzak Zhee Choo Haa

Ninyit dąį' dachan tee Zhee Choo digizheh k'ąą haa gogwich'įį. Viąii nąįį łyaa gintsii. Vasaagihdzak łaa angiłtsii. Goohan chan łyaa nitsii. Ts'ivii łaa ąhtsii. Gooti' chan łyaa nitsii. Ts'ivii googaa ehdak tr'ikyąąh'ee.

Zhee Choo nąįį khyik goozhit gwiłts'ik. Shih lęįį t'eegąąhchy'aa. Ch'ookwat zheh gwats'an ch'agookwat gogkwaa. Zhee Choo ch'iti' khyik naarii. Zhee Choo ch'iti' łuk kee'in. Gwintł'oo gwitr'it t'agwah'in.

Vasaagihdzak and the Giant

Long, long ago a family of giants lived in the woods. The children giants were tall. They were as tall as Vasaagihdzak. The mother giant was very tall. She was as tall as a tree. The father giant was very, very tall. He could look over the tops of the trees.

The giants were always hungry. They needed a lot of food. There was no store where they could go to buy food. Father Giant hunted for meat. Father Giant fished. He worked very hard.

Vasaagihdzak met Father Giant. He was sitting on the ice. Father Giant was fishing. Many fish were lying on the ice. It was a good fishing hole.

Father Giant sat by his hole. He fished and fished. He was shaking. Vasaagihdzak said, "Are you cold? Why are you shaking?"

Vasaagihdzak Zhee Choo daazhii. Zhee Choo tan kak dhidii. Łuk kee'in. Łuk lęįį tan kak dhidlii. Łyaa jał k'it gwinzįį.

Zhee Choo jał k'it dhidii. Łuk kee'in. Dantrat. Vasaagihdzak t'iyahnyaa, "Indluu? Jaghaii dantrat?"

Zhee Choo gwidįį ginkhii, "Indluu kwaa. Naljat. Chan ch'izhii zhee choo shajał k'it goohaanjik. Shajal k'it gwinzįį. Łuk choo zhat ałjal."

Vasaagihdzak t'inyaa, "Nats'aa nits'ihįhjyaa?"

"Nik'ee duulee zhik ch'izhii zhee choo haałkhwaa shits'ihiinjyaa?"

"Aaha', nits'ihįhjyaa. Ch'izhii zhee choo tr'ahaahkhwaa."

Vasaagihdzak Zhee Choo haa van eełee gahaa'oo. Trał tee gǫh'it ch'agąąii. Jał k'it gwik'eegąąhtii. Ch'izhii zhee choo nagol'in.

Father Giant answered, "I'm not cold. I'm afraid. Another giant is trying to take my ice hole. My ice hole is very good. I catch big fish here."

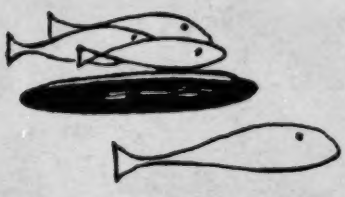
Vasaagihdzak said, "How can I help you?"

"Will you help me kill the other giant?" asked Father Giant.

Vasaagihdzak said, "Yes, I will help you. We will kill the other giant."

Vasaagihdzak and Father Giant left the lake. They hid in the trees. They watched the ice hole. They waited for the other giant to come.

Soon the other giant came. He sat down by the ice hole. He began to fish.



Ninyit kwaa ch'izhii zhee choo k'idik. Jał k'it naadii. Łuk keehoo'ya'.

Vasaagihdzak van eelin neehidik. Ch'izhii zhee choo tąįį gogwah'ąįį. Aii geeghaii nach' aa'įį. Zhee choo k'eeheedik gwats'a' nagol'in. Ch'iti' Zhee Choo ts'iheenjyaa geenjit oohilzhįį.

Ch'iti' Zhee Choo tan kak oondaa hilgik. Ch'izhii zhee choo geełee hąązhit. Ch'izhii zhee choo geełee hilgik. Datąįį gwinjik naagal.

Vasaagihdzak goh'it ch'ąą'įį yatąįį gwinjik. K'ii'ęę neeheedyaa nayol'in. Vasaagihdzak k'iłtąį' k'i' kwaii haa di'įį. Zhee choo iłdaii. Vasaagihdzak yigee yiłdaii.

Zhee choo oozhee nat'aa'nąįį. Nindhat. Ch'iti' Zhee Choo it'ee chan naajat kwaa.

Jyahts'a' t'ee Vasaagihdzak dijyaa ts'iinya'. Jyahts'a' t'ee Zhee Choo ts'iinya'.

Vasaagihdzak walked around the lake. He found the path the other giant walked on. He hid by the path. He waited for the giant to come. Vasaagihdzak was ready to help Father Giant.

Father Giant ran out on the ice. He chased the other giant. The other giant ran away. He ran along his path.

Vasaagihdzak was hiding on the path. He waited for the giant to come. Vasaagihdzak had a bow and arrows. He shot the giant. Vasaagihdzak shot him in the armpit.

The giant crashed to the ground. He was dead. Then Father Giant wasn't afraid anymore.

That is how Vasaagihdzak helped his friend. It is how he helped Father Giant.

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Zhee Choo Zhi' Haa

The Giant and the Lice

Zhee Choo Zhi' Haa

Vasaagihdzak ch'iti' Zhee Choo ts'iinya'. Ch'izhii Zhee Choo dilkhwąįį. Ch'iti' Zhee Choo t'iyahnyaa, "Shizheh diihaa neech'in'aa. Shih tr'iilęę iłtsit. Shizheh gwats'a' hinhaii."

Vasaagihdzak t'inyaa, "Łyaa shizhit gwiłts'ik. Nakhwaa neech'ihih'aa. Neech'ii'al tł'ęę gwintsal hihchyaa. Aiitł'ęę neehihdyaa."

Shih łyaa niziį. Dinjik kǫ' ts'a' ichy'aa. Łuk choo lęįį chan vikeedhichy'aa. Łuk kwaii nihdak gihidiilzhii. Vasaagihdzak gaa yataa gwahąą'yaa gogwantrii.

Zheh k'aa gwich'in gidiilk'įį. Vasaagihdzak naadii. Ch'agahaa'al.

Zhee Choo ididiitr'at. Diki' atr'at. Darak atr'at. Digin chan atr'at. Ts'a' t'inyaa, "Zhi' shi'įį. Shagahkhwąą."

The Giant and the Lice

Vasaagihdzak had helped the Father Giant by killing the other giant. Father Giant said, "Please come and eat with us. The food is ready. Come to my house."

Vasaagihdzak said, "I am hungry. I will eat with you. After I eat, I will sleep a while. Then I will go."

The food was good. A moose was roasting over the fire. A hundred big fish were cooked. The fish were lying in a pile. There were so many fish that Vasaagihdzak couldn't see over the pile.

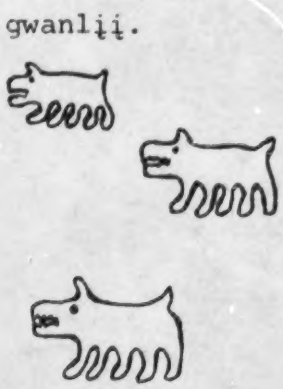
The family sat down. Vasaagihdzak sat down. They began to eat.

"Nits'oiihnya'?" Vasaagihdzak ch'oaahkat.

"Shizhi' hąąhkhwąą? Shii duuyee ihkhan. Tr'ikhyit vitee gwintsal ts'a' nał'in kwaa."

"Neenjit goohihkhaa. Ni'ik zhit shąhchii zhi' hihkhaa."

Zhee Choo ch'iti' Vasaagihdzak zhee hiłchįį. Di'ik zhit yąchįį. Zhat gwizhit tǫǫ gwanlįį. Vasaagihdzak veenjit tǫǫ gwanlįį.



Father Giant scratched. He scratched his head. He scratched his stomach. He scratched his arms. He said, "I have lice. They make me itch."

"Can I help you?" asked Vasaagihdzak

"Will you kill my lice? I can't kill them myself. They are so small that I can't see them," said Father Giant.

Vasaagihdzak said, "I'll kill them for you. Put me inside your shirt and I'll kill the lice."

Father Giant picked up Vasaagihdzak. He put Vasaagihdzak inside of his shirt. It was very dark there. It was hard for Vasaagihdzak to see.

Vasaagihdzak saw many little animals. They were running around. They looked like dogs. Vasaagihdzak made a fire. The fire burned and helped him to see the animals. Vasaagihdzak looked at the little animals. They were not dogs. They were lice!

The lice were as big as dogs. They had more legs than dogs. They looked very ugly. They had no fur.

Vasaagihdzak took out his bow. He got out an arrow.

Vasaagihdzak nin tsal lęįį nah'in. Gwizhit neegahaa'oo. Łąįį gogwich'in. Vasaagihdzak gwiiłk'in. Gwaaak'a' nyaa gwąąh'in. Vasaagihdzak nin kwaii nah'in. Łąįį t'iginchy'aa kwaa.

Zhi' łąįį angiłtsii. Gootth'an łąįį tth'an andaa lęįį. Gwinzįį gooyiichy'a' kwaa. Googhai' chan kwaa.

Vasaagihdzak dik'iłtąį' khaiintin. Dik'i' chan khaiintin. Gavahjii. Drin ninyuk gwitr'it t'agwąh'ya'. Zhi' lęįį inghan. Zhee Choo vi'ik łoochy'aa gwinju' chiyąąhjil.

Gohch'it zhi' tthak iłchįį. Vasaagihdzak digwitr'it giinjik. Zhee Choo ts'iinya'.

Vasaagihdzak drin tik inchį'. Łyaa cheendak. It'ee Zhee Choo nąįį eełee haazhii. Khaihtak t'agoł'ya' yindhan. Nan kak gǫǫł'ya' yindhan. Ch'izhii dinjii nąįį ts'oihnya' yindhan.

He worked for many days. He shot many lice. He threw the lice out through a hole in the giant's shirt.

Finally, the lice were all dead. Vasaagihdzak had finished his work. He had helped Father Giant.

Vasaagihdzak slept for three days. He was very tired. Then he left the giants. He wanted to travel. He wanted to see the world. He wanted to help other people.

K'aiiheenjik

K'aiiheenjik

K'aiiheenjik łyaa zhee choo ąhtsii. Vidizhųų łaa tr'iinin tsal rak k'it'inchy'aa. Vatth'an łaa ts'ivii chan k'it'inchy'aa. Dinjii datthak andaa t'ąhtsii. Nin datthak chan andaa t'ąhtsii. T'eeli' nint'aii ts'a' dinjik gaa zheehahchyaa gadhan.

K'aiiheenjik łyaa dinjii ditsuu nilįį. Dat'aii łaa dinjii yaa eheendal eenjit t'ąąchy'aa kwaa. Chan łyaa

K'aiiheenjik

K'aiiheenjik was a giant. His upper arms were as big around as a baby's stomach. His legs were like tree trunks and just as strong. He was taller than any man. He was taller than any animal. He was so strong he could lift a moose.

K'aiiheenjik was a very gentle man. He never used his strength to harm others. He was also very kind. He helped his friends. He shared the meat he hunted. He was always willing to work.

People were jealous of K'aiiheenjik because he was so strong. They teased him. They wanted to make him angry.

One day K'aiiheenjik's brother went hunting. He went with a group of men. They were hunting for a moose to eat. They did not find a moose and kill it. Instead, they killed K'aiiheenjik's brother. They killed him to make K'aiiheenjik angry.

veeshroonchy'aa Dalak nąįį ts'inyaa. Jidii yeenjit naarii chan gwantł'ahchak. Gwitr'it t'agwah'in chan łyaa geet'iindhan.

Dinjii nąįį K'aiiheenjik eenjit gwitr'įh nilįį giit'aii eenjit. Zhigiyąąhts'ii. Gii k'ii gwahahtsyaa gwankagantii.

Ch'ihłan drin K'aiiheenjik vachaa nihilrii. Dinjii nąįį haa haazhii. Dinjik eenjit nagaarii. Dinjik giiłkhwąįį kwaa. K'aiiheenjik vachaa aii giiłkhwąįį. K'aiiheenjik shoo gahahtsyaa kwaa geenjit t'igii'in.

Gwiizhik K'aiiheenjik adan t'ee naarii. Dinjik diłkhwąįį. Niyah'aa. Ch'izhii naarii nąįį yeek'eedal. Ts'a' t'agavahnyaa, "Shachaa daajii?"

Naarii nąįį t'iyahnyaa, "Dinjik diłkhwąįį ts'a' niyahah'aa eenjit veełeerahaajil."

K'aiiheenjik aiits'a' naarii nąįį gogwiiłk'in. K'aiiheenjik dinjik ki' heechy'aa eenjit kǫ' kak dee

At the same time, K'aiiheenjik went hunting. He killed a moose. He began to cut it up. The other hunters came to see him. K'aiiheenjik said, "Where is my brother?"

The hunters answered, "He killed a moose. We left him to cut it up."

K'aiiheenjik and the hunters built a fire, and they put the moose head on the fire to cook. It hung from two crossed sticks. The men poked it with a longer stick. The moose head turned around and around. It cooked evenly. It smelled delicious.

yaa'ąįį. Gał łaatł'įį kak neets'aii. Gał haa giich'adhak. Dinjik ki' giich'adhak aiits'a' needąądhal. Ts'a' gwinzįį khehłok ichy'aa. Gwinzįį vagwaatsan.

K'aiiheenjik gwihtł'oo tr'igwidii. K'eegwiichy'aa gwiizųų gaandaii. Vachaa tth'aii k'idik kwaa. Tsyaatsal yeeghaii dhidii. Grintł'oo daatrat naajat ts'a'. K'aiiheenjik t'iyaanyaa, "Jaghaii nanjat? Jidii dee nąąh'įį?"

Tsyaatsal yidįį ginkhii kwaa. Khyų' ginkhii. Gwintł'oo naajat ts'a'. Zhyąą dhidii ts'a' daatrat.

Dinjik ki' teetł'an ach'įį. Dinjii nąįį yak'ąąhtii. Dinjii ch'ikłak dirii nik'ii. K'aiiheenjik jidii eenjit t'ii'in yaandaii. Dinjii yak'aa heedaa geenjit t'ii'in gaandaii. Tr'ookhwaa giyuu nyaa.

K'aiiheenjik tth'an ch'ok digin kak gąhtł'įį. Aii haa tsyaa tsal kee ts'ah hiłkaii. Aii tth'an ch'ok tsyaa tsal iłkaii. Tsyaa tsal iłchii.

K'aiiheenjik was worried. He knew something was wrong. His brother had not returned. A young boy was sitting next to K'aiiheenjik. He was shivering in fear. K'aiiheenjik said, "Why are you afraid? What do you have to hide?"

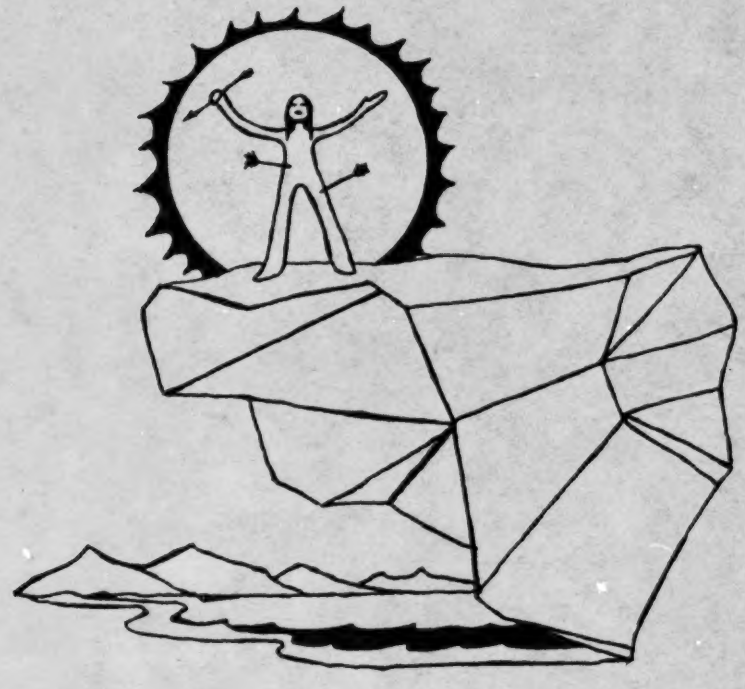
The boy didn't answer. He couldn't talk. He was too scared. He just sat and shivered.

The moose head was only half cooked. The men sat and watched it. One man sharpened his knife. K'aiiheenjik knew why the man had the sharp knife. The men planned to jump on him. They wanted to kill him.

K'aiiheenjik became very nervous. His brother still didn't come. The boy kept shivering.

K'aiiheenjik kǫ' ts'a' haazhii. Dinjik ki' ąhtsit. Danli' haa hayadiingyųų. Ts'a' dinjii nąįį tee yiiłnąįį. K'aiiheenjik łyaa deehee'yaa gaandaii kwaa. Vachaa niindhat gaandaii.

K'aiiheenjik dinjik ihtth'an haa dinjii teenzhii. Giyoahjii. Datthak givinghan gaa ch'ihłak rįį. Aiitł'ęę ddhah t'eenzhii. K'aiiheenjik kii khyųų dhidii. Dakak k'i' halii.



K'aiiheenjik went to the fire. He grabbed the moose head. He tore it apart with his hands. He threw the pieces to the men so they could eat. K'aiiheenjik became even more nervous. He knew his brother was dead.

The young boy was still shivering with fear. K'aiiheenjik couldn't stand it any longer. He had a long sharp bone tied to his arm. He swung his elbow at the boy. The sharp bone hit the boy and killed him.

K'aiiheenjik attacked the other men with the jaw bone of the moose. They shot at K'aiiheenjik with arrows. He killed all of them except for one man. Then K'aiiheenjik climbed up a mountain. He stood on a high cliff. He picked the arrows out of his body.

Khehkwaii choo neekwąįį yats'a' haa'oo. Vats'a' garookhyaa giyųųnyaa. K'aiiheenjik khehłęę gavąhtsit digee t'ee nikiviin'ąįį. Oozhee dinjii nąįį ts'a' ginkhii. Ts'a' t'inyaa, "Tr'iiłkhwąįį shohnya' shrǫ'. Aii oots'it t'iheechy'aa. Shachaa dookhwąįį gaashįį aii akwaa!

Jidii datthak shats'an oo'an hoolii. Shadhoh dlįį nihihthaa eenjit. Shat'aii eenjit gwitr'įh ohłįį. Nakhwats'ih nyaa gǫhnjii googaa gwit'ii zhashǫǫhts'ii. It'ee hihshyaa. Shąhrįį akwaa. Nakhwah khehkwaii neekwąįį chan shaa heedaa."

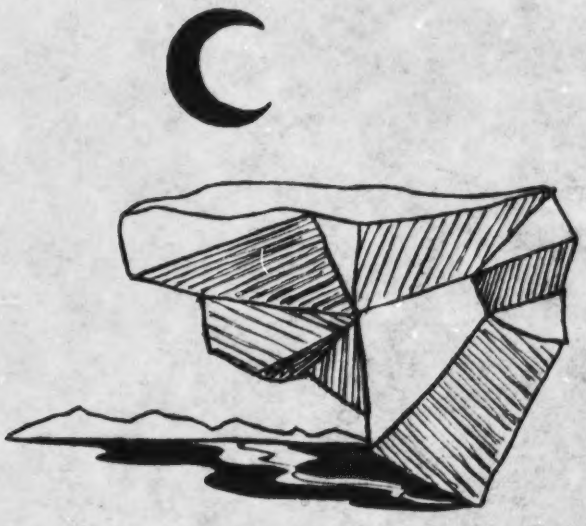
Aii jyaa nyaa gideiinjik tł'ęę drindii hiltłee. K'aiiheenjik oozhee nat'aanąįį khehkwaii neekwąįį chan vaa.

It'ee K'aiiheenjik van daagwąą'ąį'. Tth'aii hee aii ddhah zhat dha'ąįį. Ch'oonjik gwinjik.

Two great chiefs went to find K'aiiheenjik. They wanted to talk to him. K'aiiheenjik grabbed both chiefs and put them under each of his arms. He called down to the people below. He said, "Don't say that you have killed me. That is not true. You have killed my brother, but you have not killed me!"

When he finished speaking, he jumped off the cliff. K'aiiheenjik fell to the ground below. The two chiefs fell with him.

That was the end of K'aiiheenjik, but the cliff can still be seen. It is up the Porcupine River.



Olti'

Olti'

Olti' łyaa niveh t'ah'in kit nilįį. Ditsyaa nąįį kįh ahaa. Juk drin ji' it'ee niveh khehkwaii njaa oohaazhyaa. Vidinjii nąįį yit'injyąąhchy'aa. Łyaa giit'injyąąchy'aa. Łyaa giyaa goodhaii nahaadhal kwaa gaagiindaii.

Olti' vats'a' gwił'ąįį nąįį nooyit giyųųnyaa. Giihaakhwaa gwik'ee gogwandaii. Łyaa vats'a' gwił'ąįį nąįį ginlęįį. Olti' vitsyaa nąįį gintsyą'. Googaa łyaa yinjigiintł'oo.

Vats'a' gwił'ąįį nąįį adaa. Olti' gooda: haazhii. Gwintł'oo khan aagal. Ditsyaa nąįį ehkįį zhat k'idik. Dinjii ch'ihłoaatin gookįh inghan.

Olti' diniveh t'ah'in nąįį haa goots'a' gwił'ąįį tthak ginghan. Tr'injaa tr'iinin nąįį haa teegogwiłjik. Goo niivyaa zheh tthak gogwiłk'in. Goo k'eiich'i' tthak an giłtsąįį. Goo k'eiich'i' goonjii kwaa.

Olti'

Olti' was a great warrior. He was the leader of his tribe. Today he would be called General Olti'. His people depended on him. They trusted him. They knew he would keep them safe.

Olti's enemies wanted him to die. They tried to kill him. Olti' had many enemies, and there were only a few men in his own tribe. However, his men were very brave.

Gwintł'oo nich'itsidhat. Olti' datthak gwitee gąąchy'ąą. Gwilin nehkaii inli'. Olti' ch'oondaii haandaii. Adats'a' tr'inandak. Shat rįį łyaa nilįį.

Gohch'it Olti' nich'itsyahthat geecheendak. Zhyąą goovantł'ee daachįį. Ts'a' t'ee giyiiłkhwąįį.

Jii datthak ninyit dai' t'igwii'in. Vaanoodlit dzaa gwahąąh'yaa gwikįį. Jii nan łyaa shroodiinyaa dai'. Jii nan Gwich'in nąįį rįį yats'a' k'eegwaadhat dai'.

The enemy was coming. Olti' went to meet them. He ran very fast. He reached the enemy long before his men did. He killed ten enemy warriors before his men came.

Olti' and his warriors killed all the enemy men. They took the women and children as prisoners. They burned the skin houses and destroyed all of their enemies' belongings. But Olti's men never took anything.

There were many wars. Olti' fought in all the battles. He was wounded many times, but Olti' knew about medicine so he was able to heal himself. He had scars all over his body from his wounds.

Finally, Olti' got tired of fighting. He gave himself up to his enemies. That was when they killed him.

All this happened many years ago. It happened before the white man came. It happened when the land was clean. It happened when the land belonged only to the Gwich'in.

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį

The Wise Young Man

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį ninyit dąį' gwandaii inlį'. Zheh ch'adhah haa gwiltsąįį dahan haa gwich'įį. Vahan łyaa gwintł'oo gwitr'it t'agwah'in. Gwach'aa kwaii k'aahkaii. Shih chan vakahchy'aa. Dizheh chan shragoonyaa. Łyaa tr'injaa nizįį nilįį.

Ch'ihłan drin vahan t'iyahnyaa, "Shizhuu shits'eiinyaa."

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį gwidįį ginkhii, "Jidii sheenjit t'oo'ya' shoiinyaa."

The Wise Young Man

The Wise Young Man lived long ago. He lived with his mother in a house made of skin. His mother sewed all of their clothes. She cooked their food and cleaned the house. His mother worked very hard. She was also a very kind woman.

One day the mother said, "Son, please help me."

The Wise Young Man answered, "Tell me what you want me to do."

His mother said, "Son, why don't you hang the rabbit snares out in the bushes?"

His mother wasn't very careful with the words she used. And the Wise Young Man did just what his mother told him to do. He took the snares and hung them in the bushes. The snares looked very funny hanging in the bushes.

The Wise Young Man said, "The snares look foolish hanging in the bushes. But I did what Mother said. She told me to hang the snares in the bushes. That is what I did."

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Vahan t'inyaa, "Shizhuu oo'ok tr'ał tee geh gyah ɖonlik jaghaii?"

Vahan nats'aa yats'a' ginkhii gok'ąąhtii kwaa. Aiits'a' t'ee Tsyaa Gwanzhį́ vahan deeyahnyaa gwik'it t'iizhik. Gyah oonjik ts'a' oo'ok tr'ał kak dąądlii. Łyaa tr'ał kak doodlii tsingwąąhchy'aa viyiichy'a'.

Tsyaa Gwanzhį́ t'inyaa, "Gyah tr'ał kak doodlii łyaa gwinzį́ giyiich'ya' kwaa. Gaa shahan deeshahnyaa gwik'it t'ishi'in. Tr'ał kak deedhinlii shahnyaa. Aii ree gwik'it t'ishizhik."

Drin gwiteegwąąchy'ąą Tsyaa Gwanzhį́ gyah naa'ik. Drin gwiteegwąąchy'ąą vahan t'iyahnyaa, "Shizhuu geh dąąchy'ąą ɖhinlą́'?"

Khyik nihk'it yidii ginkhii. "Juk drin geh kwaa."

Gohch'it vahan t'iyahnyaa, "Shizhuu nigyah k'eeshąąhtii. Gyah dinchy'aa geh alok kwaa noł'ya' yiihthan."

Every day the Wise Young Man looked in his snares. Every day his mother said, "Son, how many rabbits did you catch today?"

She always got the same answer, "No rabbits today, Mother."

Finally the mother said, "Son, show me your snares. I'd like to see the snares that can't catch rabbits."

So mother and son went to see the snares. When they came near the bushes, Mother said, "Son, what are those things hanging in the bushes?"

The Wise Young Man said, "Those are my rabbit snares. I hung them in the bushes. I did just what you said."

Poor Mother! She spoke kindly to her son. She said, "There are no rabbits sitting in the bushes. Try setting the snares on the ground. Set them on the ground among the bushes."

The Wise Young Man set the snares on the ground. Mother and son returned home.

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Ts'a' it'ee ch'ahan ch'igii haa gyah neegihįįl'ya'. Tr'ał eeghaii nahgwan nigiin'oo, Ch'ahan t'inyaa, "Shizhuu zhik tr'ał kak jidii nandats'aii?"

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį t'inyaa, "Shigyah kwaii t'inchy'aa. Trał kak deenoiilii. Deeshaiinyaa gwik'it."

Ch'ahan gwilęįį! Ch'eeshroonchy'aa haa digii ts'a' ginkhii. "Tr'ał kak geh diilk'įį kwaa t'oonchy'aa. Oozhee nan kak ts'ąįį dich'intł'uu gwik'ee gwindaii. Oozhee nan kak tr'ał tee dich'intł'uu."

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį gyah nan kak daatł'įį. Dagahan haa digizheh gwits'ee gohoo'oo.

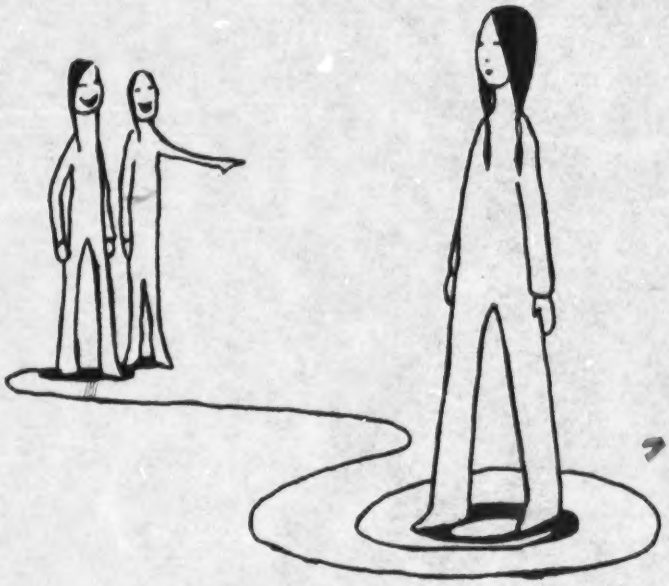
Ch'ahan t'inyaa, "Shizhuu, łąįį oo'ok ineeval honchak jaghaii? Tr'ikhyit ninyuk dąątł'įį." Chan hee ch'ahan gwinzįį digii ts'a' ginkhii kwaa.

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį ch'ivin tły'ah oonjik. Łąįį k'oh tł'an diyiłchaa. Vahan deenyaa gwik'it t'iizhik. Łąįį ineeval haachak. Tły'ah haa yineeval haachak.

Mother said, "Son, why don't you drag the dog around? She has been tied up a long time." Again the mother was not careful with the words she used.

The Wise Young Man got a caribou hide string. He tied it around the dog's neck. He did just what his mother said. He dragged the dog around. He dragged her around on the string.

Mother came out of the house. She said, "Son, what are you doing?"



Vahan dizheh chiinzhii. "Shizhuu deeni'in?"

"Łąįį ineeval halchak. Deeshaiinyaa gwik'it t'ishi'in."

"Shizhuu, deenaihnyaa gwik'it t'in'in łii. Mahsi'. Łyaa ch'igii nizįį inlįį."

"Shahan khyik hihsyaa gwik'ee gwihdaii. Deeshaiinyaa datthak nik'it shi'in."

Ch'ahan ch'igii haa łąįį łuh t'ee gąhchįį. Ilchįį. Ch'ivin tły'ah haa viyee ch'ohochaa.

Tsyaa Gwanzhįį vahan deeyahnyaa khyik gwik'it t'ii'in. Zhat gwich'in nąįį khyik Tsyaa Gwanzhįį eegeedlaa. Giyuurii dai' tsyaa vigwizhi' kwaa giyahnyaa. Łyaa nishin yąąhchįį. Gwandaii datthak deevarahnyaa gwirįį gwik'it t'ii'in.

"I'm dragging the dog around. I'm doing just what you told me to do."

"Son, I can see that you have done just what I said. Thank you. You are a good son."

"Mother, I try to be good. I always do just what you tell me to do."

The dog was dead because the son had hurt the dog. The caribou string had choked it. Mother and son buried the dog.

The Wise Young Man always did just what his mother told him. The people in the village laughed at the Wise Young Man. They called him the Dumb Young Man. He lived to be very old. All his life he did just what he was told to do.

53

Shaaghan

The Old Woman

Shaaghan

Jii gwandak ninyit dai' veegwaraandak. Gwich'in nan kak gwa'an vee gwaraandak.

Shaaghan diyeets'i' haa gwich'įį. Viyeets'i' veeraadii. Vakąį' nąįį gwinzįį iyiichy'a'.

Viyeets'i' łyaa gwinzįį iyiichy'a'. Vakąį' nąįį łyaa yeet'iindhan. Viyeets'i' gwinzįį k'eech'aahkaii. Gwach'aa kwaiitryah kwaii ch'adhah haa ahtsii. Dakai' nąįį eenjit k'eech'aahkaii. Gwinzįį gohotł'įį. Shoo ginlįį.

Drin gwitee gwąąchy'ąą vakąį' nąįį naarii. Drin gwitee gwąąchy'ąą goo'at vikeech'ahchy'aa ts'a' k'eech'aahkaii. Khaa gwitee gwąąchy'ąą dakąį' nąįį keegwąą'in. Chyaagak gavąą'in dąį'. Gał taa haatłak. Khaa gwitee gwąąchy'ąą gał taa haatłak vakąį' nee'al dąį'.

Shaaghan łyaa gwitr'įh nilįį. Diyeets'i' eenjit gwitr'įh nilįį. Shaaghan yakąį' neekwąįį nąįį yindhan.

The Old Woman

This story was told long ago. It was told in the land of the Gwich'in.

An old woman lived with her daughter. The daughter was married. She had two handsome husbands.

The daughter was very beautiful. Her husbands loved her very much. The daughter sewed nicely. She sewed beautiful clothes and moccasins out of animal skins. She sewed for her husbands. They were very well dressed, and they were happy.

Ts'a' t'ee k'eegwiichy'aa gwinzį́į yinjigwiłtsą́į́.

Diyeets'i' neehę́ę'ee yakąį' nąį́į haa.

Ch'ihłan t'ee shaaghan t'inyaa, "Aanąį́į shiyeets'i'. Zhi' niki' tee keegǫǫł'ya."

Vigii yeeniinzhii. Yavat diki' deedha'ą́į́. Shaaghan zhi' keegwą́ą'in. Shaaghan tthah di'į́į. Divit zhit yiłtin.

Shaaghan tthah khąhtin. Khan digii dzii gwizhit gwaagwat. Vigii khan niindhat.

Shaghan khan gwitr'it t'agwah'in. Digii kii dhah geełee hiłtsuu. Aiitł'ę́ę diki' kak niyą́ąhtsuu. Shigii goihchy'a' yindhan.

Aiitł'ę́ę shaaghan datth'an nah'in. Shaaghan nilį́į ts'a' vatth'an dadlar. Shaaghan datth'an tły'ah haa k'at ch'oołchaa. Vatth'an va datąį'.

It'ee k'eejit k'it'ihchy'aa. Shigii vikiighai' chan shi'į́į. Shigii vinin chan shi'į́į. Shigii vagwach'aa chan naalzhii. Ch'akąį' nąį́į neehį́į'ee.

Every day the husbands went hunting. Every day the wife cooked and sewed. Every evening she watched for her husbands. She ran outside when she saw them. She jumped over a stick. Every night she jumped over a stick when her husbands came home.

The old woman was jealous. She was jealous of her daughter. The old woman wanted the two husbands. She made a plan. She would trick her daughter. She would trick the two husbands.

One day the old woman said, "Come here, daughter. I will pick the lice from your hair."

The daughter came. She put her head in her mother's lap. The old woman had an awl. She had it hidden in her sleeve.

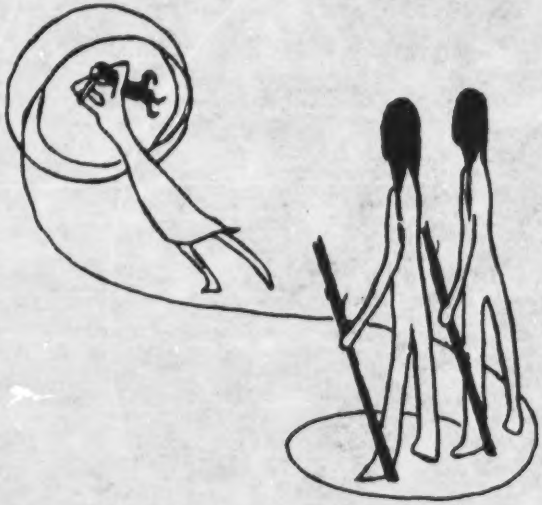
The old woman took out the awl. She quickly poked it in her daughter's ear. The daughter died.

The old woman worked fast. She took the skin from her daughter's head. She put the skin over her own head. She wanted to look like her daughter.

Shaaghan chiinzhii. Digii yataa haatłak chy'ąą ts'a' haazhii. Dachan zhak gahaatin. Dachan dehthat dootin duuyee taa haatłit. Aiitł'ęę t'ee ch'akąį' nąįį nol'in.

Ch'akąį' nąįį tǫǫ hee oo'ęę neegii'oo. Shaaghan changik. Ch'ataa hiltłee. Dachan ninghaa. Adan t'ee hanjii k'it'eeldhaii.

Ch'akąį' nąįį daga'at kiighai' gąąh'in. Daga'at nin gaah'. Daga'at gwach'aa gaah'in. Neegęę'ak kwaa. Goo'at hiljii gaagiindaii.



Then the old woman looked at her legs. They were baggy with old age. The old woman wrapped caribou hide string around her legs. It made her legs look strong.

"Now I look young. I have my daughter's face. I have my daughter's clothes. I will fool the husbands."

The old woman went outside the house. She went to her daughter's stick. She made the stick lower. She couldn't jump over a high stick. Then she returned to the house. She waited for the husbands.

The husbands came home at dark. The old woman ran outside. She jumped over the stick. The stick fell down. The old woman almost fell down, too.

The husbands looked at their wife's hair. They looked at their wife's face. They looked at their wife's clothes. They were not fooled. They knew that their wife was gone.

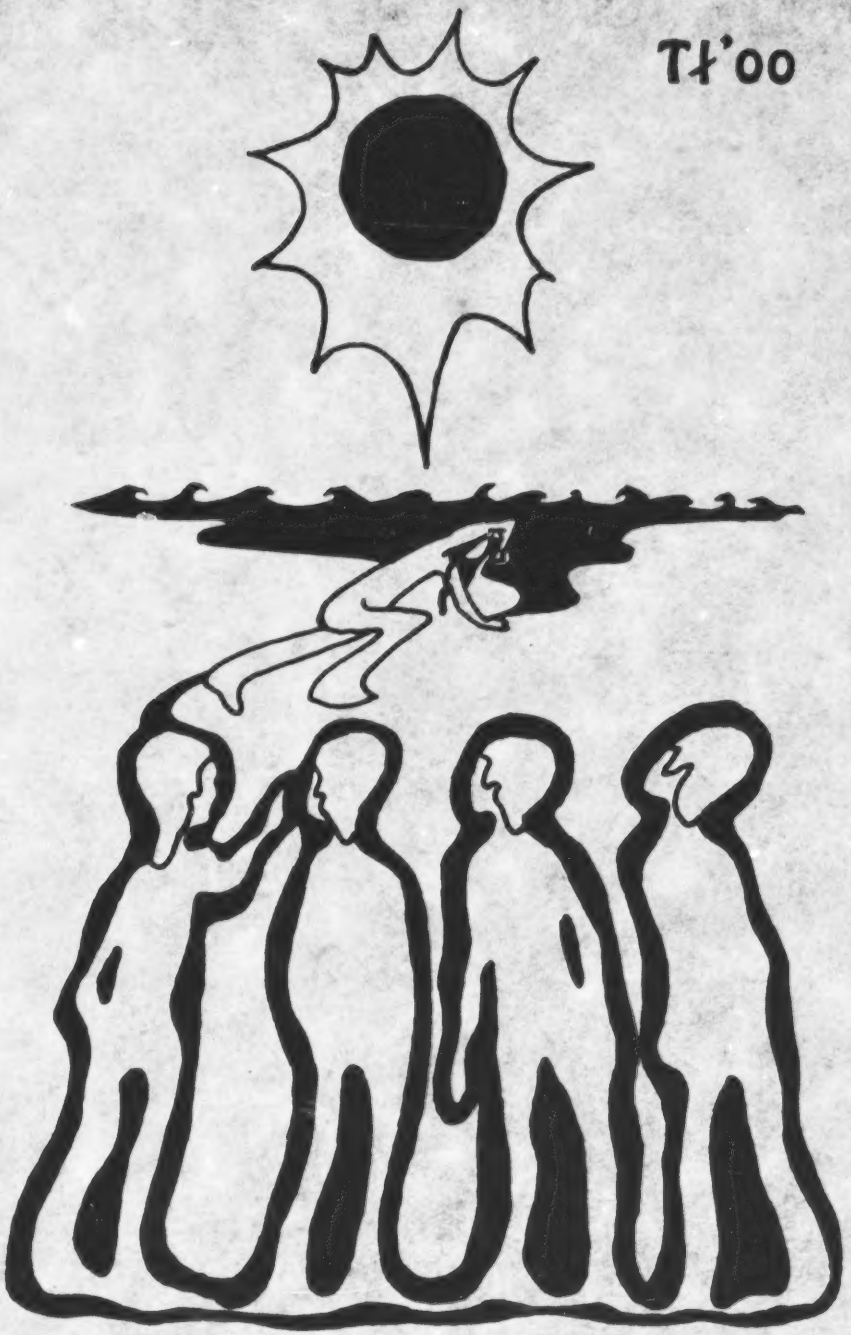
Ch'akąį' nąįį shaaghan haa nagaatthat. Giyąhtsit. Niheedhaa gwats'a' giyąąhkhwai'.

Ch'akąį' nąįį gwintł'oo tr'igogwidii. Goo'at hiljii. Goo'at kwaa akwat tr'iijii giveenjit vakahchy'aa. Tr'iijii chan k'eech'aahkaii. Tr'iijii chan zheh shragoonyaa. Ch'akąį' nąįį duuyee daga'at gwandaii neegahtsii.

The husbands chased the old woman until they caught her. They beat her until she died.

The husbands felt sad. Their wife was gone. They had no wife to help them. The husbands could not bring their wife back to life.

Tɬ'oo Thaɬ



Tł'oo Thał

Tł'oo Thał Gwich'in dinjii zhuu nilįį. Ch'oonjik gwa'an geeghaii gwich'įį.

Ch'ihłan t'ee łyaa ninyit dąį' teeghaii gwa'an dhichįį. Gwintł'oo cheendak. Gwintł'oo dhichįį.

Khan hee Tł'oo Thał neegwąą'ya'. Tr'adlaa gwiitth'ak. Dindii gwąąh'in. Dinjii łaa dinjii k'it'inchy'aa kwaa nąįį nah'in. Givindee chan nahdrin. Goo kiighai' chan tł'oo iłchįį nats'aa iyiich'ya'

Tł'oo Thał

Tł'oo Thał was a Gwich'in Indian. He lived near the Porcupine River.

One day, a long time ago, he lay down on the beach to sleep. He was very tired. He slept deeply.

Suddenly Tł'oo Thał opened his eyes. He heard laughter. He looked around. He saw a group of strange men. They had eyes like crystals. Their hair was the color of dead grass. They stood around Tł'oo Thał, and they laughed at him.

Tł'oo Thał was frightened by so many strange men. There was no place to hide. He could not run away. So he stood there bravely. He waited to see what the strange men would do.

The men still laughed. They looked at Tł'oo Thał. They thought it was very funny to find him sleeping. Tł'oo Thał didn't laugh. He didn't think it was very funny.

The men grabbed Tł'oo Thał. They took off his clothes. Then they tied a rope around his waist. They

k'it'inchyaa. Tł'oo Thał neegiilzhii ts'a' geedlaa.

Tł'oo Thał dinjii lęįį nah'in gwintsal naajat. Łyaa gǫh'it ch'aroo'įį gokwaa. Duuyee chan geełee haagii. Aiits'a' zhat·zhyąą nadhat łyaa yinjiintł'oo. Dinjii nąįį deehee'yaa nagol'in.

Dinjii nąįį tth'aii geedlaa. Tł'oo Thał gąąh'in. Dhichįį giigwąh'ąįį tsingwąąhchy'aa giindhan. Tł'oo Thał adlaa kwaa. Tsingwąąhchy'aa łaa yindhan kwaa.

Dinjii nąįį Tł'oo Thał gąhtsit. Giigwach'aa giyeełee hiłjil. Aiitł'ęę tły'ah giirak tł'an diłchaa. Tł'oo Thał oondaa t'eegihiiłnąįį. Łuk tr'iłjal k'it'inchy'aa. Khaneeshuu dineedhak ts'a' chan chineet'aadhak. Dinjii nąįį gavaa shroonchy'aa. Tł'oo Thał chųų zhit neet'ee gaahthak. Chan khaneegiyiluu. Gwilin jyaa digiyah'in.

Dinjii nąįį it'ee akhagogoonyaa. It'ee Tł'oo Thał khaneegąhchįį. Teeghaii zhyąą oo'an t'eehiil nąįį. Łyaa

threw Tł'oo Thał into the river below. He was like a fish caught on a hook. Up he came. Down he went. The men were having fun. They threw Tł'oo Thał into the water. They pulled him out of the water. This happened many times.

The men stopped their game. They pulled Tł'oo Thał out of the water one last time. He fell on the river bank. He was tired and out of breath.

Tł'oo Thał felt badly. He didn't care what happened to him. His wife was gone. All he wished for was a quick death. But death didn't come.

The men brought Tł'oo Thał new clothes. He put on the clothes. Then the men rolled a log in front of Tł'oo Thał. They laid his head on the log. They brought an ax. Tł'oo Thał said, "Now my life will soon be over. They will chop off my head. All my sadness will end. I will be sad no more."

The ax fell. One long braid of hair dropped to the ground. Thunk! The other braid dropped off. The men were still laughing.

cheendak gwiizhik vizhii nagwan.

Tł'oo Thał łyaa veenjit gwiizųų. Deerah'in gaa veenjit gwinzii. Va'at hiljii. Khan ołchi' rįį yindhan. Gaa niyit kwaa.

Dinjii nąįį Tł'oo Thał gwach'aa k'eejit antł'ee ginlii. Aii gwach'aa naazhii. Aiitł'ęę t'ee dachan choo giyeh ndaa niintin. Aii kak giiki' deedha'ąįį. Daa'ąįį oo'ęę gahaa'ąįį. Tł'oo Thał t'inyaa, "It'ee shidrin ninyit kwaa ndaa hąą'aa. Shiki' k'eech'igiheekyaa. Chan tr'igwihihdii kwaa. It'ee shan ndaa gwaa'ąį'."

Daa'ąįį oozhee naanąįį. Kiighai' niltł'yaa njyaa hee oozhee nan kak ninjil. Gich'iildǫ' chan kiighai' ch'ihłak oozhee naanąįį. Tth'aii hee geedlaa.

Tł'oo Thał adlaa kwaa. Oihtree rįį yindhan. Va'at hiljii. Vikiighai' chan kwaa. Chan ninyit kwaa.

Dinjii nąįį ch'eet'igwiiniidhan giits'a' agwaahch'in gwik'ee gogwandaii. Tł'oo Thał ts'eet'it ki' ts'eet'it

Tɬ'oo Thaɬ could not laugh. He felt more like crying. His wife was gone. His hair was gone. Death would not come.

The men tried to show kindness. They gave Tɬ'oo Thaɬ a pipe and tobacco. They also gave him some matches. The matches wouldn't work. Tɬ'oo Thaɬ wanted his flint. The men threw it away. So Tɬ'oo Thaɬ threw the matches away.

The men cooked food. Tɬ'oo Thaɬ ate until he was full. His heart was still sad, but his stomach was happy.

The men returned to their boat. Tɬ'oo Thaɬ went with them. The men taught him to speak and write English. He was with them for two years. Then he returned to his home.

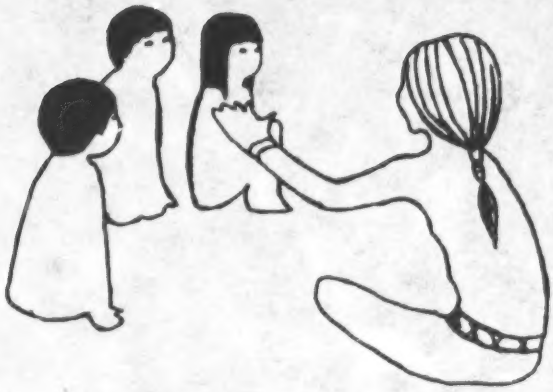
kwaii haa intł'ee ginlii. Kǫ' chan giyantł'eiinlii. Kǫ' yeenjit gwit'rit t'agwah'in kwaa. Tł'oo Thał ky'ah rįį yindhan. Dinjii nąįį oo'an giihiiłnąįį. Ts'a' Tł'oo Thał kǫ' oo'an hiiłnąįį.

Dinjii nąįį vikeech'igiłchy'aa. Tł'oo Thał ch'ihęędıi gwats'a' ch'in'al. Vidrii tth'aii tr'igwidii gaa vavat aii shoo nilįį.

Dinjii nąįį tr'ihchoo ts'a' neegahoojil. Tł'oo Thał gavaa haazhii. Dinjii nąįį vaanoodlit ky'ąą giheekhyaa ts'a' ch'idihęętł'oo geegiyụụłtin. Neekwat neegwaaadhat gavaa t'inchy'a'. Aiitł'ęę dizheh gwits'ee hoozhii.

Tł'oo Thał tr'ookit dinjii zhuu ch'ookwat inlį'. Łihteedeelyaa chan nilįį. Da'at chan ineegwah'ąįį. Nihłaa shoo ginlįį ts'a' tr'iinin lęįį chan gee'į'.

Tł'oo Thał nishin yąąhchii. Gwilin jii gwandak eegwildak. Vaanoodlit haa gwich'įį gogwaa'į'. Googaa tr'ookit gook'at deedhizhii dąį' ginildee kwaa.



Tł'oo Thał became the first Indian trader. He was also an interpreter for the white men. He found his wife again. They lived a happy life and had many children.

Tł'oo Thał lived to be an old man. He told his story many times. He learned to live with the white men. But he never forgot his surprise and fear the first time he saw them.

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